

**ANDERSON ISLAND CITIZENS' ADVISORY BOARD
OCT 12, 2023 MEETING SUMMARY MINUTES**

This meeting was a conducted at the American Legion Community via ZOOM.

Call to Order and Verification of Quorum: Chair Jacob Anderson called the meeting to order at approximately 5:00 pm. Present were Jim Cook, Gabe Sachwitz, Heather Rankos, Kristan Kennedy, Bob Bedoll, and Rick McPhearson. Absent were Tiffany Waggoner and Larry Nelson. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

County guests Jani Hitchen, Trever Threde, and Alice McDaniel were welcomed.

Update from Councilmember Jani Hitchen.

Because Councilmember Hitchen was accepting an award on behalf of the council, she provided an update on the council budget process. Board member Heather Rankos raised questions regarding the Riviera water situation with Cole Point. Councilmember Hitchen agreed to respond over email to questions on this issue which will also be addressed by Riviera Water Department head Russ Rodocker in a presentation later this month.

Approval of Agenda Items:

It was moved, seconded, and unanimously approved to adopt the agenda.

New board members:

New board members Jeremy Kamel (representing the booster club) and Jan Kosloski (Anderson Island Arts) were welcomed. Jacob thanked previous Treasurer Eric Cunningham and previous member Al Parker for their service as their regular terms expired. Jacob requested volunteers for the positions of Treasurer and Secretary. In the interim Jacob will serve as Secretary.

Unfinished business:

• **Long-term ferry plan, KPFF Recommendations, Revenue options.**

Jacob noted that he attended the Council in district meeting two weeks ago where the findings of the Long Term ferry plan were presented, with a summary provided to the AICAB board over email. Trever noted that the full presentation to the council at this meeting and video are available on the county website for those interested. Trever's update:

- Ferry financial study was conducted and publicly available online. Key takeaway is that the current financial status is unsustainable and on current path the ferry fund balance would be negative by 2027.
- Ferry fares alone cannot fix the problem. In the budget we cannot close the gap with fares only
- Ferry rider survey: users comfortable with \$1-3 per ticket increase per car, with a sharp drop-off in support at the \$4+ per ticket level.
- Report options to mitigate: 1) county wide ferry district including unincorporated Pierce County. It does not currently exist and the county would need to approve it. It could bring in \$15 mil/year without a vote. Anderson Island would generate \$46k/year as part of that. Average \$53 / year additional average per taxpayer. 2) Utilize pre-existing transportation benefit district collected via sales tax. Council could select. At 1/10th of 1% would generate about \$6 mil and could go straight into the road fund, which supports the ferry fund. Trever is only presenting options that the council could take up and not recommending one or another. Jim Cook mentioned that the consultants laid out thorough options in their report including peer comparisons. Heather Rankos asked clarifying questions of Trever on the mechanics of ferry funding and revenues.
- County is looking to see if vehicle weights are appropriate for the infrastructure. Aging ferries have been put under weight restrictions before they were retired or replaced. Not close to that now. But a consultant and in house team are looking at this.

- **Ferry budget proposal 2024-25**

Trever: decision packages proposed by county staff and approved by exec. Council is evaluating these

- Service work boat: about 30 x 8 trailer-able boat that could access ferry vehicle deck by water with a bow door that could pull up to a beach. Would be coast guard inspected for up to 12 passengers. Removes need in most cases for standby tug, backup boat, and potentially reduces burden of AIFD boat. It would be about \$500k including purchase and ongoing operations and maintenance cost. In past 4 years have spent more than this for standby service including backup tugs etc. Expect this boat would last 20 years so could be a lot less. Can access ferry deck to put mechanics onboard and can be a standby boat when there is generator loss. Heather asked whether the requirement to build in the State affects this. Trever said a lot of the good builders are already based in the state. They might also look at a used boat. New boat is about a year to construct.
- Ferry maintenance manager position. This position already exists within the county and adapting it to the ferry system. Dedicated to ferries and not shared with airports. Manage capital projects, dock upkeep, and provide assistance and oversight to HMS for boat maintenance. Got federal funding for this position via the State. If council brings forward we will be able to hire Jan 1 but there are a lot of new positions and changes so it might take a while. Though county considers it high priority and will try to move forward in Q1 2024
- Youth ride free program. Left out of original legislation on a technicality but have worked with state to cover the loss from zeroing youth fares. Expect it to go into affect 1 Jan.
- Ticket booth: not a specific budget item, but county is looking at where this. Conduit has been laid. Re-engaged traffic engineering team to see how much space it needs and where it would go. Not expecting it in 2024. Gabe asked what the benefit is. Jacob mentioned lane enforcement and clarity for visitors. County would put a stoplight at the top of the overflow lane to queue when the overflow lane needs to move that would be switchable at this booth.

- **Loading cards**

Jacob mentioned concerns about germs but acknowledged problems with people not being counted. Trever mentioned lane cutting. Said cards are sanitized each time. But they are working with HMS to find a solution. Jacob mentioned cards under windshield wipers. Trever said these fly off when people engage their wipers. County will test tire chalk. Other option is using glove. Jeremy said this is a lot of hassle for a few free loaders. Trever said the ticket booth at the top of the lane solves this in the longer term. Heather mentioned “graduation” paint. Heather asked what the problem is if numbers are off. Trever responded that it affects federal funding. Jim mentioned magnetic tags that could stick to a car.

- **Christine Anderson Engine Replacement**

Christine and Steilacoom are both due for rebuilds. Christine A had originally been scheduled for replacement but because of supply chain issues it was delayed and the cost doubled. So now instead of replacing we will rebuild. Caterpillar delayed delivery of parts kit and not expected to ship until late Oct. Asked HMS to re-write schedule for rebuild to ensure enough notification time for the single boat service. When we have the schedule they will issue a rider alert. Can't start work until parts are in our hands. After Christine rebuild is done they will swap boats and do same procedure for Steilacoom II. The Caterpillar new quiet engines were never purchased – when Caterpillar quoted 1.5 yrs to do this we tabled the money and now three times we have sought grants for the gap. We put \$2 mil aside for it but the project would be \$4.5 mil. Engines are \$2 mil. Still have \$1.9 mil set aside but its likely that if we don't get a grant for the full difference, that money will go back into the ferry fund. This project was tuned down even though it made it three rounds through the process. Jim asked if the Steilacoom and Christine engines are the same (they are not). Trever: engines in Christine are not in bad shape. They will be rebuilt to same state as a rebuilt engine. Steilacoom engines are a bit cleaner. Christine engines are not emissions-regulated at all. The goal of new engines was primarily environmental. Engines should outlast the boats with proper maintenance. Jim:

Kitsap has a ferry they have had since the 20s that still works. Jeremy: would props be switched to variable pitch on Christine? Trever: need to look at weight, don't want to have to reduce deck space. Ordered parts for both boats back in May.

- **Villa Beach Erosion**

Trever: Maintenance and Ops division annually monitors 2 villa beach road locations. Last inspection Oct 2022. They have scheduled this year's inspection. In 2022 they found there was erosion but not on County right of way or property. Limited on what they can do. As soon as the county can impact the area they can take action. Jim: erosion is on shore side and under public road. Jacob asked PPW to update us if they learn anything. Trever: if anyone notices major erosion put in a "click fix" ticket and someone will come take a look, they are very responsive. Jeremy: edge of road is breaking off and wondering about fence. Trever: in contact with Burgs. Fence installer has been asked six times for a quote. It is on the top of Trever's list of things to do. Heather asked about the missing lights at White's that has been missing for a year. Trever did not know but suggested we asked Road staff.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:15 pm

- **Proposal to Extend AI Elementary to Include 4th and 5th Grades**

The Steilacoom School District, responding to island parents who would like AI Elementary to extend to 4th and 5th grades, will put a bond issue before the voters in February that includes this. Besides a new school in Dupont, expanding the high school, and a middle school, this bond issue will also include the following items for Anderson Island Elementary: a new playground, new walking track, and a new teacher and classroom for the 2025/2026 school year. Melissa and Shawn, representatives of the district, answered questions about the timing of the change and whether it would be possible to add the two grades any sooner. The requirement for a new classroom is the piece that will take the most time, even if we were to use a temporary structure.

NEW BUSINESS:

- **Ferry Parking Lot-Entry and Exit Issues**

There was some brief discussion, but no county Public Works staff were present, so this was tabled.

- **Proposal to Amend AICAB Ordinance to Replace the AICC Rep with one from Island Arts**

It was moved, seconded, and approved by unanimous voice vote to replace the AICC representative with a representative from Island Arts. Jani agreed to push this through.

- **Security/Enforcement Issues at AI Parks-Rick Anderson**

Rick Anderson gave the background and history of enforcement on the island and the current problems occurring in the parks with people not following rules and becoming belligerent, endangering others.

Rick asked if we could possibly introduce and support legislation to add a special taxing district in order to add a sheriff here. Rick estimated that it would add \$0.25 per thousand dollars to our property taxes and islanders would have to vote on it.

Rick also asked that we work with Pierce County roads department to close parking on Guthrie Road near the Old Swimming Hole.

And finally, Rick asked that the ferry workers not close the gate until the scheduled departure time.

- **AICAB Facebook Page for Island Communications**

It was moved, seconded, and approved by unanimous voice vote to create an AICAB Facebook page. Jacob will do this.

Adjournment: It was moved, seconded, and approved by unanimous voice vote to adjourn the meeting at 6:33pm.

The next AICAB meeting is Thursday, April 12, 2023.